

NPA News



Northern Potters Association
www.northern-potters.co.uk

February / March 2016
£2, free to members

Editor's Comment

This issue is packed with interesting things including the Great Pottery Throwdown from the winner's mouth, and lots of great images of pots.

I am particularly pleased to include some stunning photos from the NPA-NE Oriental Inspirations exhibition in Durham, and Maria Chesters-Bouma's article on her dedicated recreation of antique blue Delft tiles.

Maria describes herself as an amateur and needed persuading that "real potters" would be interested! I am sure that there are more such stories out there and hope that Maria's article will inspire other members to tell us.

You may detect a certain Cumbrian bias in the images. This is because I had so few in stock that I made an appeal to members of my local region. I hope that others will want to redress the balance in following issues.

The prizes for the Xmas Quiz went unclaimed so you'll never know what you missed.

Joan Hardie

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent those of the editor or the Northern Potters Association.

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Front Cover

Alan Ball, from "Oriental Inspirations"

Back Cover

Roger Bell, wall hanging, high fired terracotta and metal

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Next issue

To contribute to the next issue of NPA News send your articles, events, comments and images by **25 March 2016**

Articles should be between 300 and 1000 words saved as .doc or .txt files.

Images need to be high quality for printing, saved as .jpg files.

Please send text and images as email attachments in separate files (please don't embed images in the text) to npanews@btinternet.com

Email or phone if you have any queries.

From the Chair

I hope that you have all recovered from the Christmas and New Year malaise that affects us at this time of year and that you are busy in your workshops producing some great pots!

We have all been shocked by the recent devastating floods, particularly in the north-west, and I sincerely hope that not too many of you have suffered damage to house or pottery. With my thoughts still in that region I must congratulate Matt Wilcock on his excellent win of The Great Pottery Throwdown. Very well done. Most of the comments made to me about the programme express amazement at just how complicated making a pot is and how many stages are involved. Let's hope that this new public appreciation and awareness continues and our sales increase!

I'm very pleased to tell you that the new committee is most enthusiastic and is buzzing with ideas. We especially want to encourage more members to participate in regional activities since the main aim of having regional groups is to get members involved in events, outings, exhibitions or visits without having to travel too far. Please do go to meetings if you can and also let your coordinator know what would interest you.

Margaret Lawrenson

Advertising in NPA News

Per issue prices

Small ads (30 words max.) free to members

Boxed adverts

colour 1/2 pp	£30	1/4 pp	£18	1/8 pp	£10
B&W 1/2 pp	£20	1/4 pp	£15	1/8 pp	£8

Repeat adverts

Six consecutive inclusions for the price of five

Payment by cheque to NPA prior to publication. Send cheques and artwork to the editor.

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New Books – Roger Bell

Ceramics In America	Ed R Hunter	£47.00
Crafting Exhibitions		£13.00
Deep In The Valley Of Teabowls	Kituai & Stewart	£12.00
Paperclay – The Perfect Union	Sanger & Sliva	28.00

Book Review

PAPERCLAY – The Perfect Union, Astrid Sanger & Otakar Sliva

Astrid & Otakar are from Austria and this book was written in German in 2013 and has been successfully sold there. They have translated it into English and it is now available in the UK and elsewhere. Until they finalise distribution here, I can supply copies by post or bring to Kindrogan next March. I must declare an interest in that I helped improve the translation from German – not for financial gain but in exchange for a piece of work!

The authors say, of the book, that you can expect ‘competent, practical advice’, ‘step by step instructions’ and ‘inspiration from famous paperclay artists’. While there is plenty of theoretical and research backup to the methodology put forward, it is mainly intended as a means to take the maker through the steps necessary to use the material.

The gallery of artists’ work is not only inspirational in the diverse range of pieces but illustrates that the material is far more widely used than I ever imagined. Maggie Barnes, Michael Flynn, Marcio Mattos and Angela Mellor, in the UK, all use paperclay.

But why bother with the extra process of introducing additives or buying expensive prepared paperclay? I always thought of it as useful in making work with a weighty top on narrow supports. However the vastly reduced shrinkage means it is possible to incorporate metal or fired ceramic pieces within the piece without cracking during the firing. Also if you make sculptural forms you can avoid most of the problems of adding pieces at different stages of drying. Indeed it is possible to add wet to dry paperclay.

For Sanger and Sliva this is a very personal book about a methodology they are committed to but includes enough details of their lives and interests to be readable rather than just reference. It contains quotes from eg Henry Miller and throughout the traditional figure of ‘Burgi’ appears – they live in Burgenland near the Hungarian border. I think you will find this book moves on from those of Gault et al.

NPA at Earth and Fire

The NPA has secured a stall at this years Earth and Fire, held at Rufford Abbey. There will be two places made available to members of Northern Potters Association who have not exhibited at Earth and Fire before.

The selection will be held during February and the two successful applicants will be informed end of February.

Please come along and give them your support and encouragement.

Diary

- until 20 Feb Tea with Anemone: Ikuko Iwamoto, Sidcot School
- 22 Feb to 7 Mar The Art House, Sheffield, NPA-SE exhibition
- until 27 Feb Natural Makers, Touchstones Rochdale
- 25 Feb to 19 Jun Behind Closed Doors: Verity Howard, Manchester Craft & Design Centre
- until 12 Mar Made with Love, Craft Centre & Design Gallery, Leeds City Art Gallery
- until 12 Mar Adele Howitt/Forgotten potteries of the Dearne Valley, Cooper Gallery, Church Street, Barnsley
- 15 Mar Crafts Council Talk: Are you export ready? £25, Sheffield
- 18 Mar to 25 Apr Kendal Museum 'From The Earth' Roger Bell, Gordon Baddeley (Wood Sculpture) & Jake Baddeley (Paintings & Printmaking)
- until 9 April Jarred: ceramics from the collection, Touchstones Rochdale
- until 30 Apr Solo – Gin Durham, Craft Centre & Design Gallery, Leeds City Art Gallery
- 8 to 10 April Ceramic Art London, Central Saint Martins, 1 Granary Square
- May to Sept Maiden Bridge Gallery, Tatham, Lancaster. Roger Bell
- 10 to 12 June Potfest Scotland, Scone Palace, Perth
- 12, 19, 26 June Holmfirth Art Market, Holmfirth, Huddersfield
- 24 to 26 June Earth and Fire, Rufford Craft Centre, Near Ollerton, Newark,
- 29 to 31 July Potfest in the Park, Hutton in the Forest, Penrith
- 5 to 7 August Potfest in the Pens, Penrith
- 19 to 21 August Art in Clay, Hatfield, Hertfordshire, including NPA Member Roger Bell.

Please send the editor details of any events you think members would like to hear about.



James Hake, Thrown and squared vases, tallest 12cm, Nuka glaze, to be shown at Ceramic Art London 2016

The Great British Throwdown – 10 to 4 to 1

Matthew Wilcock



10 Contestants

As a member of Northern Potters Association, I received a global e-mail in November 2014. They were looking for enthusiastic and confident ceramicists/potters to take part in a brand new talent search for BBC2. I decided to apply, mainly for the experience of putting together a CV as a ceramicist, selecting pieces by justifying and critically analysing my work. The application process was quite rigorous but I enjoyed the opportunity to reflect where I was now and which direction I wanted to go with my work.

When I was selected as one of the final 10 to appear in the program, the experiences I had already gone through did nothing to prepare me for the actual filming. We all were confident potters in our own chosen techniques/methods, but we were not necessarily going to be given those. We were asked to produce work that would be an original creation, not based on any previously produced piece. There was no rivalry, just support and encouraging comments from fellow ceramicists.

4 Finalists



The weekly tasks were very varied and covered a good range of skills and preferences, apart from being reminded about the 'time left' it didn't feel very competitive, we all tended to enter our own little 'making' world. Unlike the spot tests which were fast and furious and definitely out of everyone's comfort zone. I think we all knew that the final test would be a tea service; it is the ultimate ceramic challenge, covering function and aesthetics.

I didn't expect to win; I don't think any of us gave it much thought. We were all juggling busy lives and filming was so intense with the addition of trying to be creative. I have built some lasting friendships with people that share a strong passion for pottery; we are all very different, but were brought together because of our like-minded belief to remind the nation of our pottery heritage and 'get creative'.

1 winner



Making Delft blue tiles – Maria Chesters-Bouma

The last time my hands had held a lump of clay was when I was at primary school, nearly 40 years ago. Although I enjoyed it then (and the fruits of my infantile fumlings still adorn my fond mother's windowsills) I had no intention of taking up ceramics. That was, until I decided I must have Delft Blue tiles in my kitchen. Antique ones were unaffordable and affordable reproductions were ugly.

As usual when I want something I can't afford, I decided to make my own and to try to sell enough tiles to cover my costs. I had no idea that it was a stupidly difficult project for a complete beginner.

I bought a little kiln and went on a 1-day course in the Netherlands. A nice man showed me how to roll and cut the tiles, mix up some ready-made glaze powder, put it on a tile and then doodle on it with neat cobalt oxide, having outlined the image using a simple stencil. The result was neither attractive nor authentic in appearance. The glaze was rough and the colours harsh. More research was needed.

In the Dutch Tile museum in Otterlo I photographed most of the collection but did not learn much about the technicalities of manufacture. I bought books and googled endlessly. I learnt that tiles were rolled, cut, laid out to dry until leather hard, and then trimmed to size. I found that minimising the amount of rolling helped to keep them flat and square, so I slotted and glued together some pieces of plywood to make a clay slicing apparatus so the tiles needed less rolling and trimming.

After the initial drying between sheets of plasterboard, tiles are stacked, dried and then restacked with spacers. Another little DIY project: a drying cabinet made up from a sturdy steel rack, some leftover materials from our barn conversion and a 50W greenhouse heater.

Glaze turned out to be a very difficult thing indeed. Having tried ready-made glazes and got rubbish results, I decided on some industrial espionage and visited two tile workshops in Friesland. Interesting fact: most Delft tiles were not made in Delft at all, but in Friesland, where there are vast clay deposits and a history of tile making that goes back to the middle ages. That's great but all I learnt was that they still made their own glazes in accordance with 17th century recipes – which they were not about to give away.



or: How to tile your kitchen the hard way

I consulted more books and Mr Google. Eventually, I found some records of authentic glazes: I was advised to take 300 parts of sand from the beach near The Hague (high in sea shells – calcium carbonate!), 100 parts of soda ash, 200 parts of lead and 60 parts of tin, throw in some potash and some alum, and then calcine, fire and mill away. Eventually, I mastered enough glaze chemistry to convert this into a glaze recipe using modern materials. Only it crazed like mad. Further investigation revealed that the old tiles were made of a clay high in marl, which allowed the use of alkaline glazes with a high thermal expansion and the typical bright colour response of old Delft Blue. Having failed to source a similar kind of clay from a UK supplier, I adjusted the glaze and got a reasonably good result.

If you have ever seen an antique Delft Blue tile, you may have noticed that it was not really white, but a gray colour. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the tile manufacturing industry was enormously competitive, costs were cut, materials often impure and all waste was recycled. In an effort to make the resultant murky glaze appear white they added some cobalt oxide to the mix – a sort of optical brightener, I guess. So I added a pinch of cobalt oxide into the glaze and, as any experienced ceramicist could have predicted, got speckles.

Probably the most difficult problem was that my pictures, no matter how finely painted, went blurry in the kiln. Either the glaze was immature or the picture was overcooked. I adjusted the glaze, paint and process but still was not happy with the result. Then I came across Tony Hansen's internet article about ball milling. He promised better glaze suspension, a lowered maturing temperature, a velvety finish etc. This spawned a whole new DIY project. My husband Don and I peered at pictures of ball mills on the internet, learnt the principles, and bought on ebay a pair of conveyor rollers and a geared electrical motor. Add sprockets and chain, some angle iron and Don's prowess with a welding set, and hey presto, we had a milling machine. Innoxia sold us two HD polyethylene vats and I spent an afternoon rolling little balls from Valentine's industrial porcelain. We now had jars and media.

The milled glaze is lovely and the cobalt speckles have disappeared. It has helped to maintain the definition of the painting although to this day it is not as fine as I would like. I guess I'll just keep working at it.

It has been a fascinating journey. We now have Delft tiles in our kitchen. My tiny tilery business has a tiny turnover and makes a tiny profit. I have discovered the endless possibilities of ceramics and my head is full of ideas. Best of all, I have met many lovely people who have taken an interest in my efforts and welcomed me to their ceramic world.



'Looking forwards from the past' – Alex McErlain

I have chosen to focus this year's series of articles for 'NPA News' on the rich archive of pottery held in the collections of York Art Gallery. The series title, borrowed from textile artist Alice Kettle, relates to the legacy of historical ceramics and its impact on modern studio potters who have tried to contribute to the development of the subject.

Painted earthenware

One of the most difficult pottery techniques to master is in my opinion painting on tin glazed pottery. The dry glazed surface acts like blotting paper (there is a term you don't hear much now!) sucking the moisture from the laden brush and making the task of control so much more difficult. Therefore the technique is best suited to swift and decisive brush strokes.

In the historic piece I have selected; a shallow bowl or charger sometimes described as a 'blue dash charger'; the painting is executed quite freely. Green copper oxide brush strokes characteristically soften or 'bleed' contrasting with the definition of the cobalt 'dashes' around the circumference which give the object its name. There are three small scar marks towards the centre of the dish revealing that the piece was fired in a stack of similar dishes.



Tin glaze, painted dish.

Classed as an 'untraced find', produced in London or Bristol 1680-1690. 36cmd.

Reference: YORM 2000-2678-1.

Photographs: 'York Museums Trust (Art Gallery)'



There is an abundance of this type of pottery in the York Art Gallery collections and it was made in many parts of Europe. Some tin glazed ware has very finely controlled brushwork but I have always preferred pieces like this with their gestural painting and unfussy designs. They seem to represent the 'people's art' rather than the more 'formal art' for which the technique was often employed.

Phillip Eglin has a number of pots in the York collections. His work regularly draws on numerous aspects of historical ceramics and he has referred to this as a kind of 'pick and mix' approach. In this large jug with a Madonna and child image he paints with deceptive precision. It appears to be a rather loose piece of brush painting however the accuracy and placement of motif and weight of line betray a skilful hand at work.

This is not a tin glazed work it is slip painted with lead glaze and enamel details. The shape has some of the looseness of those English leather jugs called 'blackjacks', with their malleable form and strong flaring base. Eglin's jug is press moulded and he has built on the fluidity of the form by applying flowing linear brush strokes.

It draws strongly from history then takes it forward into new territory. Eglin frequently studies museum collections, making precise drawings which help him understand the works. He has made some fine examples developed from studying medieval jugs and currently has new work based on country pottery made at Buckley in North Wales.

Studio potters have explored tin glazed work quite extensively but it does not appear to be as popular as it once was. The main exponent of the technique in the 20thC. was Alan Caiger-Smith, who at his pottery in Aldermaston not only made a wide range of wares but ensured the techniques were passed on through his employment of a team of potters. With the current renewed interest in making slipware, perhaps the time has come for a tin glaze revival?



Painted jug, with Madonna & child image
Maker: Phillip Eglin, 2015. H57cm
Reference: YORAG : 2015.15,
Photograph: 'York Museums Trust (Art Gallery)'

Suppliers Viewpoint

Graeme Simpson of CTM Supplies tells us a bit about his business and the challenges of supplying ceramic materials

Our background is in glass manufacture and supplying metal oxides to the glass industry. There aren't many people who will supply in small lots and so we joined forces with CTM Supplies a couple of decades ago to be able to do that. When the owner looked to semi-retire ten years ago we took over CTM and then significantly developed its product ranges. Our buying of metal oxides in 1000kg lots means that we can pass on good prices for the materials.

The Simpson family name is well-known in the glass industry for developing the redox melting theories into practical factors to be used when calculating the reduction and oxygen potential of each material, especially the sulphate solubility in amber glass and safe bubble-free glass melting, whether a 100kg pot or a 600 tonne/day furnace.

Angela Bailey, my sister, is the other main contact for CTM; our father Bill Simpson is still involved, though over 80 and semi-retired he mainly concentrates on helping glass customers. Both Dad and I are Fellows of the Society of Glass Technologists.



We have three other staff here in Doncaster, including "Young Graham" who runs the counter.

Louise has three in her team in Exeter. We do pretty well when you think that as well as the call-in customers we dispatch about 8500 parcels and 650 pallets each year.



We suffer the usual retailers' challenges –

Abrupt changes in demand when fashions change because of magazine articles or TV programmes.

Expensive small items such as bags of stains, oxides or tools are tempting to shoplifters.

Couriers make late inward deliveries or lose outward parcels, so that we break our promises to customers. It's always the urgent ones that go wrong!

Customers ordering the materials at 4:30 pm the day before the start of a course they've booked on weeks before.

Since the TV programme, we have had what feels like dozens of phone calls from people trying to con us out of potters' wheels using stolen credit card details.



Ceramics materials can be problematic. For example, a key ingredient may be declared hazardous so that popular colours are no longer available. Then the price of selenium, used in red stains, rose from £9 per kg to over £100 per kg in a year, while praseodymium rose from £30 to £150 per kg.

It's always difficult when customers lack the basic technical knowledge to make an informed purchase. We sometimes get people on courses who have been asked to pick up some glazes or clay but have not been told what type, or the firing temperatures. If they can't get hold of the tutor on the phone they end up with boring clays and underglazes with wide firing ranges.



Similarly, it can be challenging explaining to a customer why their glazed pot does not

look like their friends' pot even when it was fired at the same time in the same kiln using the same glaze. We end up explaining about mixing glazes, how thick or thin to make them so it matches the porosity of the clay or how thick to brush them to allow the oxides time to react, how 20 degrees can make a glaze go from textured matt to super glossy.

Other challenges we share with potters selling to the public, though we aren't artists and don't make pottery.



We are happy for people to browse for several hours, especially as many have driven two hours to come and see us. A few people, however, will severely challenge our patience by spending three hours asking us how to choose clay, throw pottery, handbuild, coil, fire by gas, electric and wood, how to mix glazes, make raku, use porcelain, and what tools they would need, then buy a rubber kidney for 95p. It can also be very frustrating to find out that they are on a course (even a degree course) and do not feel that they can ask their teacher anything.

You wouldn't ask the petrol station assistant how to drive a car

On another day the sun shines and a customer comes in with a box of chocolates or biscuits, or a piece of pottery that they have made, to thank us for the help we have given and all is good with the world.

Members' Gallery

Send images of your work to the editor for inclusion in the gallery.



Judy Taylor - saddleback litter



James Hake - bowl, 30cm, celadon with white pours



John Anderson - stoneware bowl, 14 cm.
Sodium silicate with sponged red glaze;
inside pale green glaze over green slip.
Influenced by Hsinchuen Lin.



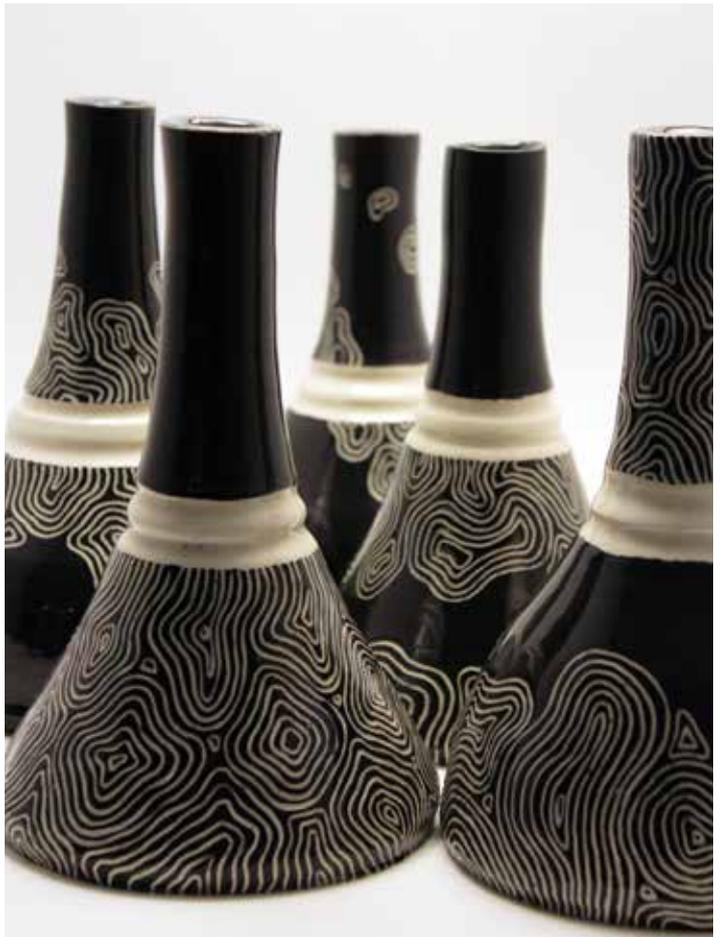
Roger Bell - fern, wood-fired stoneware



Ian Marsh - Slab dish, inset strips, extruded feet.



Rebecca Callis - wave dishes



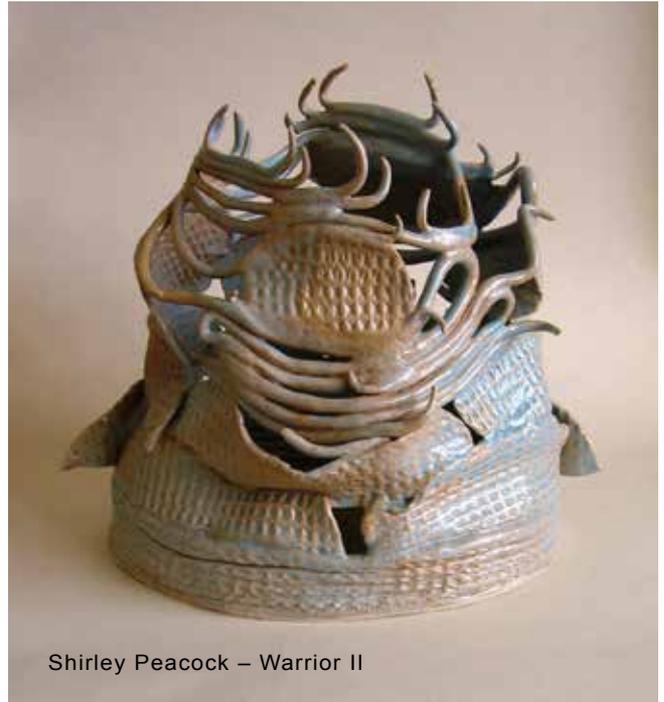
Colin Jowitt - slip decorated earthenware with a clear glaze

Oriental Inspirations

Pieces from the NPA-NE exhibition at Durham's Oriental Museum



Geoff Proudlock – two glazed porcelain bowls



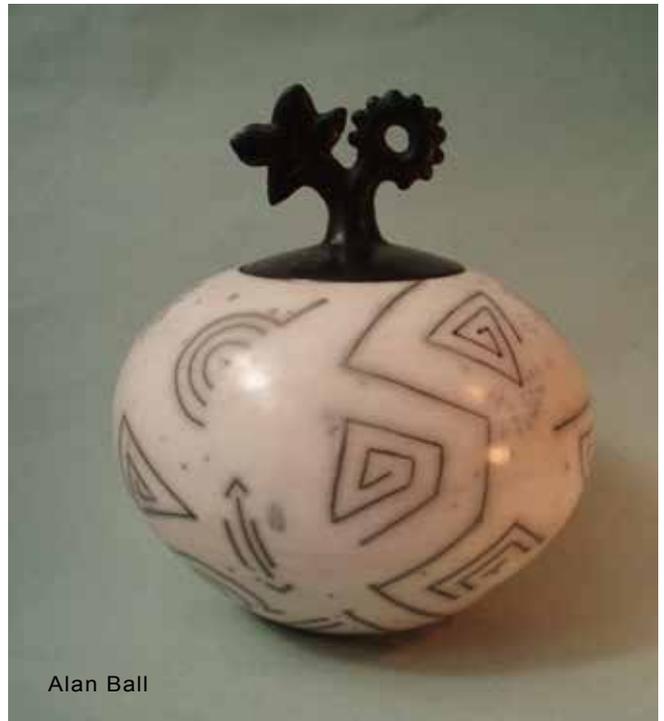
Shirley Peacock – Warrior II



June Proudlock – Glazed stoneware wall piece



Shirley Peacock – Zen Master



Alan Ball

Exhibition News

An invitation to apply for a selected NPA exhibition at Gallery Oldham

The exhibition, titled 'Northern Colours', from 1st October until 3rd December 2016, will be staged in the beautiful, naturally lit gallery space at Gallery Oldham. The NPA held a very successful exhibition here in 2011 with many appreciative visitors commenting on the high quality work on display.

The deadline for applications is 27th May 2016 and selection will take place in June.

If you would like to take part, please email Lesley Nason for an application form and further details
lesley.nason@btoopenworld.com.



CoCA Shop Opportunity (York)

Since it opened in August last year, the shop at CoCA (Centre for Ceramic Art) has been offering a small variety of ceramics for sale. This has been successful and it is now the intention to increase the number and styles of work available. The shop aims to offer work which is of a quality suitable to be included in the collections, and must meet the same assessment criteria as a piece being considered for acquisition.

Find out more by going to www.curatorspace.com and entering 'CoCA' in the 'search opportunities' box. Register as a user (free and quick) and make your submission.

To have the best chance of success:

Attach 4 to 6 good quality images: high resolution; clear focus; showing the work against a plain background. Don't crop close around the work – it makes it look unnatural and distorts the edges.

Show the range of work you are offering, and the range of retail prices.

Include enough relevant information to give the selectors an idea of your

experience – pick out the highlights.

Be sure you can supply an initial quantity and can re-stock at short notice.

Work is usually displayed for 3 months, after which you will be asked to collect any unsold items. Sample pieces will be requested when a provisional offer is made.

If you can offer a range of work of a suitable quality, please make an application. It would be great to see more NPA members represented in such a prestigious venue.

As a shop, it is not really suitable for installations or very fragile pieces. Work is primarily displayed on shelves. The commission rate is 50% + VAT, so you get approx. 45% of the selling price. Make sure you are comfortable with this. If you sell in any galleries in the York area, the retail price should be similar throughout.

You can apply as often as you wish, and put forward different ranges. You will only hear from the selectors if you are invited to submit work, but your application remains on file and you may be approached later.

Barbara Robinson northern-potters.co.uk

I still love, and use, the mug I bought in 1966, the first pot I remember buying for the pleasure of possession. Now our collection is more than 500 pieces.

I started making only five years ago when at Potfest in the Park I saw some ceramic chickens – beautiful, but beyond my means to buy several for a flock, so I decided to make my own. My chickens are very idiosyncratic and not up to a technical standard to sell. I make them purely for the pleasure of seeing them in my garden, without the responsibility of caring for live chickens!

So my place in the NPA is largely as a collector of small pieces for my own pleasure. I am a retired teacher and conference organiser.

I have volunteered for the NPA committee and taken responsibility for uploading event information to the website as I am particularly interested in the NPA as an accessible organisation 'out there' working for its members' enterprises through networking and facilitating.

I would like to take this opportunity of complimenting Sylvia Holmes and the NPA committee for developing such a very professional, informative and attractive website for members. I have been using



websites for over 20 years now and appreciate excellence when I see it.

The NPA website offers a great platform for members' work so if you have not forwarded your profile and four gallery photos to me for uploading yet, please do so, as this is included in your membership. Please also email me notifications of your exhibitions and events and do not hesitate to send me your suggestions and ideas for further improving website connectivity between NPA members and the public and purchasing community.

Wanted Ads

Wanted ads wanted

Free to NPA members up to 30 words

Reach 400 people who might want to get rid of the very thing that you want.

email npanews@btinternet.com

Studio share wanted in Newcastle upon Tyne / Tyne & Wear area

To share overheads and workspace.
Possibility of running equipment maintenance and kiln building business.

Please contact Jim on 07593017696 if interested. Ideally looking to find people to start affordable studios with.

Craft Potters Association events in the North

The CPA is keen to encourage contact with regional ceramic associations and to offer more events and opportunities to members and associates in the northern half of the country. Two events have been organised to which all NPA members are very welcome.

Handling session at Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, Sat. 16 April, 1.30 to 3pm

An exciting opportunity to see the Institute's extensive collection of 20th Century studio ceramics. To be held in the ceramics storage facility at the Institute, led by Helen Welford, the Collections Officer. She will give a short introduction to the ceramics collection and then supervise the handling of a selection of pieces, including work by Hans Coper, Magdelene Udondo, Elizabeth Fritsch, Philip Eglin and others.

The cost of the visit is £5 per person. There will also be free exhibitions and events at the Institute which you can visit on the day. MIMA has a car park and cafe and is approximately 10 minutes walk from Middlesbrough station.

Jim Robison studio visit
Sat. 4 June, 10.30 to 4pm

Jim Robison has kindly agreed to host a visit to his studio and gallery in Holmfirth. After a welcoming hot drink, the visit will start with a talk about Jim's work and career in ceramics, followed by a demonstration of his preparation and making techniques. After a lunch break (homemade soup and bread can be booked in advance) the demonstration will continue with more making, surfacing and firing techniques. There will also be an opportunity to look round the gallery and sculpture garden.

The cost for this event is £15 CPA members, £17.50 non-CPA members, + £2.50 for lunch.

For more information or to book a place on either / both of these visits (numbers are limited), please contact me, Sylvia Holmes, on sylviaholmes.npa@gmail.com
I am happy to try and coordinate car share offers and requests for either event.

NPA on Facebook

As mentioned in the last newsletter we now have a Northern Potters Facebook group. It's called "Northern Potters Association."

Already we have around 90 members – if you use Facebook please JOIN our group. I would like to see 200+ members by the next issue of the newsletter (no pressure...).

I know not everyone is au fait with social media but it is a fantastic way of networking, it is free, it is informative, and best of all it gets us talking to each other.

I have been busy sharing articles about other potters, about techniques, shows that need applying for, kilns and other equipment for sale. There are workshop ads, gallery call outs...Potfest Potters Camp info...Need I go on? It is very useful.

You could post pictures of your own work, your activities, or ask each other technical questions. This is your page, so please use it. If you don't know how then find out.

The NPA members requested better communication between the regions, so this is the start of it. We already have NPA South East and NPA West pages.

I would really like to see each region have a page/group, so I am looking for volunteers in North West, South West, East and North East regions to get this off the ground, I can happily set the pages up for you but you lovely NPA potters need to keep it going as I have foxes to make.

Next, I think a Twitter account don't you?

Anna-Mercedes Wear

Summary of Committee Meeting on 17 January

Minutes of previous meeting were agreed

Committee

Jill Christie, Neil Pitts and Paul Klos have resigned leaving 13 current committee members.

Exhibitions and Events Issues

The budget and planning for the showcase exhibition at Gallery Oldham in Autumn 2016.

Plans for the "Potters Olympics" organised by Geoff Cox at Potfest in the Pens.

An unselected NPA "Rolling Auction" stall was agreed, with a pilot at Charnwood Market

Publicity

A new promotional leaflet for the NPA was discussed and is under development.

Marketing project

A survey to elicit marketing information was discussed, which will be used to create a "welcome pack" for new members.

A pilot project will initially focus on North East region and is under development.

Facebook

Some privacy/security issues were discussed.

Newsletter

The editor always needs articles, images, and particularly event details from members.

Website

Some possible website updates and optimisations were discussed and will be further investigated and costed.

Finance

Current assets of £12,500 and liabilities of £1,600, leaving a current balance of £11,000. The changeover of signatories is causing difficulties with payment of bills and the bank is being slow to resolve the problem.

Membership

Membership stands at 463 with 17 joint, total 480 members.



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Welcome to new members

Christopher Barnes
Ken Grace
Vivienne Sillar
Sarah Taylor
Josie Walter
John Wheeldon
Amanda Wood
Nina Wright

Carlisle
Sheffield
Brampton
Blyborough
Matlock
Wirksworth
Misterton
Otley

Cumbria
South Yorkshire
Derbyshire
Lincolnshire
Derbyshire
Derbyshire
South Yorkshire
West Yorkshire



A warm welcome is extended to our new members. We look forward to seeing you and your work at future events and images of your work in our Members' Gallery and website.

Visit northern-potters.co.uk for membership forms and subscription rates.

Our regional coordinators

Geoff Proudlock, NE

I am a retired Civil Engineer/ University Lecturer. Since retiring, I have done pottery courses with Jenny Morten and Claude Frere-Smith. I make thrown vessels in stoneware and porcelain.



Ruth Charlton, NW

My work has always had a strong figurative element, with particular emphasis on facial expressions. I usually work on a small scale, creating miniature portraits in clay.



Geoff Wilcock, West

Thrown, cast and surface techniques combined with spontaneity and intuition evolved through a tacit knowledge of forty years of experience.

My outcome: 'What you see is what you get'



Barbara Chadwick, SW

When I moved to Manchester 20 years ago, I did a part time B.Tech. course in Ceramics and Design and was hooked. My latest work is hand crafted birds in raku, naked raku and porcelain.

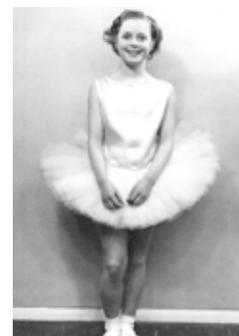
Brian Holland, SE

I have a studio at Yorkshire Art Space where I run workshops, make sculpture and vessels. I am a founder member of the Sherwood Forest (previously Rufford) Wood Firing Society. I am also a co-director of the Sheffield Ceramics Festival.



Barbara Wood, East

Following an unsuccessful attempt to enter the world of ballet, I pursued a career in accounting, computing and systems management which brought me to my current position of regional coordinator for NPA-E (via one or two other things).





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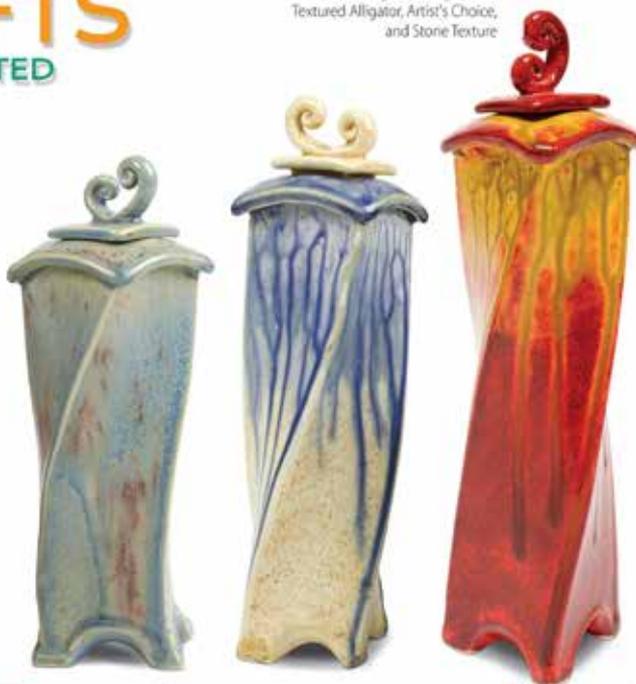
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Regional News



North West

Unfortunately, the last social at Bob and Audrey's at the beginning of December had to be cancelled due to the flooding but somehow Dave and Jackie Brittain made it through and home again after a few detours! Thora Talling has offered to host the next social on Sunday 14th February. I hope that doesn't interfere with everyone's Valentine Day plans. I will be sending an email out with contact details and times later.

Geoff and Chris Cox have had a good response from our region for members to take part in the Potters' Games at Potfest this summer. Sounds like it will be great fun for all those involved and a chance for members to get to know each other.

Coordinator: Ruth Charlton

Email: ruthcharlton5@gmail.com

Tel: 016973 71690



West

We celebrated the close of 2015 in our usual style, with a festive-themed, vessel challenge and a Jacob's Join. The meeting was longer than usual due to the large turn out of members and the amount of varied seasonal treats to consume. We also had the pleasure of passing round the 'Great Pottery Throw Down' winner's trophy, and taking 'selfies' of the piece produced by Keith Brymer-Jones and Kate Mallone. We were all delighted when Matthew won; it's been a great advert for promoting ceramics. Let's hope there's another series. Thanks to Julie Miles for keeping us tuned into the series and supporting Matthew through our NPA face book site.

To date we have about 12 members keen to be involved in 'Potter's Olympics' at 'Potfest'

Our New Year resolution is to actively pursue new venues for exhibitions, members to report progress at the next meeting. Some people are going to the International Ceramic School in Kecskemet, Hungary at the end of March. This is a trip that has been made several times in the past by members of the group; it has always been an amazing experience.

Forthcoming Exhibitions

Platform Gallery, Clitheroe, mid-summer 2016, date still to be confirmed

PR1 Gallery, UCLAN, Preston November

Details of future exhibitions will be forwarded to members – further information contact ghwilcock@uclan.ac.uk

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday 8th March 'Ale Emporium' Preston at 7.15 p.m. The ceramic themed piece is 'Mothering'.

Coordinator: Dave Harper & Geoff Wilcock

Email: ghwilcock@uclan.ac.uk

Tel: 01772 862852



South West

We have arranged a meeting for SW potters at The Old Parsonage, Stenner Last, Didsbury, Manchester M20 2RQ, 7 to 9 pm on Monday 29th February. Look forward to seeing our members there. Please let us know if you can attend. We will be sending emails or contacting you by post.

Our next SW Exhibition will be at the Old Parsonage Didsbury M20 2RQ on 30 April, 1 & 2 May. Details will be sent to members. If interested please contact us as places are limited. PLEASE NOTE our new email address.

Coordinator: Barbara Chadwick

Email: email@sw-npa.co.uk

Tel: 0161 980 2111



By now all SE members should have received the minutes from the meeting on the 24th. If anyone is still not receiving information please e-mail me.

South East

We will be exhibiting at ARTHOUSE, Sheffield from 22 February to 7 March (check them out at www.arthousesheffield.co.uk). Private view Friday, 7–9pm.

There is no fee to exhibit but I will be collecting a small contribution of £4 from exhibitors towards preview costs. Work can be for sale and should be labelled with name, title, firing details and price (or attach a list). The gallery takes 10% commission on all sales. Please e-mail or phone for delivery details. Submit up to 6 pieces and we will try to exhibit at least 4 of them. Please encourage your contacts to attend the private view.

Over 20 members from the SE group have booked space at the SHEFFIELD CERAMICS FESTIVAL, alongside makers from other areas. All 35 spaces were sold within a few weeks. Receipts will be issued shortly and the website updated within the next few weeks.
www.sheffieldceramicsfestival.com

Coordinator: Brian Holland

Email: brianhollandceramics@yahoo.com

Tel: 01909 724781

Mob: 078129 28174



East

Having recently taken over as coordinator for this region, I am delighted to report that the first event, a studio visit to Ken Jaquery in Ilkley on 24 January, was a great success. Ken shares a building with other artists, including NPA members Chris Bailey and Jackie Knight, and painter/printmaker Joy Godfrey, and throwers Dan and Laura. All were on hand to talk to us and discuss their work and techniques. We held a brief meeting, with information about upcoming opportunities, and then heard from two of the committee members for Ilkley Art Trail, which we were encouraged to apply for.

A working group has been established, comprising Glynis Neslen (Hull), Alison Brayshaw (Beverley), Elizabeth Smith (Saltaire), Helen Graham (Harrogate) and Nina Wright (Otley), so all parts of the region are represented. Some suggestions of what members want from the group were mentioned, and these will be discussed by the working group. The next group meeting will be at CoCA on 12 March.

Coordinator: Barbara Wood

Email: npaeb.barbarawood@btinternet.com

Tel: 01759 318146



North East

The exhibition “Oriental Inspirations” has now finished. We had a very interesting “Meet the Artists” event on Sunday 15 Nov. with illustrated talks given by Claude Frere-Smith, Sue Dunne, and Helen Graham. Each gave us fascinating insights into their work and inspiration. Family, friends, and other members of the public enjoyed the occasion and the opportunity to talk to the exhibitors and view their work. Sales went well and a wall-piece by Sue Dunne was bought by Durham University to place in their library.

Some of our members were able to enjoy the annual Henry Rothschild Memorial Lecture given by Halima Cassel at the Shipley Gallery in Gateshead on 17 November.

We plan to have a NE Open Meeting on Sat. 12th March in Durham followed by a lunch afterwards. Members have been emailed with details.

Coordinator: Geoff Proudlock

Email: geoff@gproudlock.plus.com

Tel: 01325 353445

On the shelf - Rene Cryer

Rene assembled her shelfie from her favourite pots, then took photos of them in their natural habitats (and added another one)



The latest acquisition is from this year's Potfest, and is by Sally Warton Ceramics. I probably should have bought two of them, to make a grouping, but I am pleased with the one I have here and it is in a bedroom.

The tall giraffe was bought from Richard Raby - I think from one of the Exhibitions of work at Holmfirth Arts week. It is in a bathroom and looks great with the décor.



The picture is by Annie Peaker which, again, I bought whilst attending one of her weekend courses.

I bought this piece to go in the bathroom - as it seemed an appropriate subject - done by Sarah McDade, who works in Hebden Bridge.

A sculpture of two female figures which I won in the raffle at Ripon. There is a pressed signature (centre photo) that I can't read, but I'm sure that somebody out there knows whose work it is.

The small dish is by John Calver and I bought that when I went on one of his courses.

I bought his sculpture by Jane Smith at one of the weekends that used to take place at the college at Ripon. I found it very interesting to see people making their wares and telling us all how they did it!

This big tall pot – holding one of my plants – is by Barbara Miskin, a friend of mine who works in her pottery at Colden, near Hebden Bridge. I have several of her pots, but have chosen this one as my favourite.

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